

# M E R C A T O R :

O R,

## Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

### CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From **Saturday, July 4. to Tuesday, July 7. 1713.**

*This Paper Written for general Information.*

*A Manuscript received from Scotland, upon the Subject of their Trade there.*

**A**S this Paper is written to rectify the Judgments and Opinions of those, who either are ignorant of the true State of our Trade, and the present Treaty, or are led into Mistakes by the Designs of others, so no Helps will be refused from those, who being Well-wishers to so useful a Design, shall contribute their assistance, by giving any Accounts, that may be depended upon, or stating their own Opinions and Judgments in any particular Cases; especially where those Opinions are attended with such Proofs, and have such weight in them, as shall render them proper and likely to forward the Publick Good of our Trade, or the great end of this Paper, viz. to undeceive and disabuse the People.

For this reason, having received a Manuscript from Scotland, directed to the Author of the *MERCATOR*, tho' from an unknown Hand, it has been thought proper to give it a Place in this Work, it being founded upon such Matters of Fact, as are undeniably true, and as answer exactly to, and may serve instead of the Scheme or Table of the Duties payable in France upon our Fish before the Treaty, and by the Treaty, which was promised in the last Paper.

The Judgment and Impartiality, with which this said Paper is written, will not only justify its being placed here, but will recommend the Subject it is written upon to every Reader, especially to those concern'd in the Trade of Scotland, who cannot but see, what a happy and flourishing Trade Scotland would have enjoy'd by the Treaty of Commerce with France, had the said Treaty taken Effect; and what Condition that Trade is reduced to by the delay.

The Letter is as follows.

S I R,

**O**NE might venture to pass a Judgment upon the Bill of Commerce, in so far as it relates to Scotland, by comparing the several Memorials and Representa-

tions given in to the Lords Commissioners of Trade by the Royal Burrows (who are the Representatives of the Trading People in Scotland) with the Articles of the Treaty, by which it will appear, that all they desired or was material for their Trade was granted. Yet the interest of Scotland in this matter, will more distinctly appear, by comparing the Circumstances of the Trade of that Country after the Peace of Ryswick, in which it must still continue, with the Circumstances it would have been in, if the Bill had passed.

It is certain and undeniable, that most of the French Goods and Merchandizes used in Scotland, will be Imported there, notwithstanding our Trade remains actually Prohibited, or in effect so, by the heavy Duties in France; for in Scotland little other Wines or Brandies but French are drunk, and their Salt is so necessary for our Fishing, that even in the time of War, we were supplied with those Commodities directly from France, or from Holland and other Places, and either entered them as coming from Spain and Portugal, or smuggled them upon the Coast.

As the Trade now stands, we must export Specie to purchase the Wines, Brandies, Salt, Paper, &c. which are the principal Commodities Imported from France into Scotland, for our Woollen Manufactures, particularly our Serges, Fingrims, Stockings, Platens, Says, Stuffs, &c. and in general all Manufactures made or mixt with Wooll, Silk, Hair, Thread or Cotton, are now intirely Prohibited, all which might have been carried into France upon the easie Duties in the Tariff of 1664, if the Bill had passed: For as to Broad-Cloth, Mill'd Serges and Ratins, which were put upon the Tariff of 1699. it is our Misfortune to have little of that Species of Woollen Manufacture.

As Matters stand now, our Leather dress'd, curried or tanned Gloves, &c. our Lead, and indeed all the Merchandizes made of Iron, Brass or Copper, are in like manner Prohibited in France, which might have been Imported upon reasonable Duties, if the Bill had pass'd.

Our





Our Herrings, had the Treaty taken Effect, might have been Imported into France, paying the same Duty as the Dutch pay, (viz.) Sixteen Livres per Last, which was secured by the Eighth Article of the Treaty, and all possible Objections obviated by a Clause in the Bill; whereas now by the Arrest of the French King, Anno 1701. we must pay 80 Livres per Last, which is five times more than the Dutch pay, and is equal to a Prohibition.

Our Salmon, which had the Treaty been made Effectual, would have paid by the Tariff of 1664. Six Livres per Eight Barrels, must now pay by the Arrest of 1701. Forty Livres, which is five times as much.

Our Cod-Fish in Barrel, before the Tariff of 1664. paid a very inconsiderable Duty, and by the Tariff of 1699. they are to pay Sixty Livres per Last; whereas had this Treaty taken Effect, we were to have paid only Forty Livres per Last, of 12 Barrel, weighing 300 l. weight each, over and above the small Duties payable before the Tariff of 1664. both which are considerably less than the aforefaid Duties in the Tariff of 1669. which we are now subject to.

Our Coal, which by the Tariff of 1664. would have paid Eight Sols per Barrel, must now by the Arrest of 1701. pay 30 Sols, which is near four times as much.

Our Green and Salted Hides, by the Tariff of 1664. would have only paid Ten Sols each; whereas by the Arrest of 1701. they must pay now Thirty Livres per Dozen, which is three times as much.

Calves Skins, by the Tariff of 1664. would have paid only four Sols per Dozen; whereas now by the Arrest of 1701. they must pay twelve Livres, which is Sixty times as much.

Our Glew, which is the produce of our Skins, by the Tariff of 1664. would have paid Eighteen Sols per Hundred weight, which now by the Arrest of 1701. must pay twenty Livres, which is above twenty two times as much.

Our Butter, sent from Kintire and other places of Scotland, whereof there were considerable quantities Exported, paid only by the Tariff of 1664. twelve Sols per Hundred weight, and by subsequent Arrests since 1664. it must pay six Livres per Hundred weight, which is more than twelve times as much.

Our Beef, Pork, Tallow, Cow-Hair, Glass-Bottles, and several other Merchandizes from Scotland, will now by the heavy Duties imposed by the Edict of 1701. stand in Effect Prohibited; which might have been Imported into France to good Advantage, had the Treaty been made Effectual.

And it is to be observed, that before the present Treaty of Commerce, several kinds of Goods, packed in Casks, Chests or Cases, paid Duty by weight, without deduction of the weight of the Cases or Imbalages, such as Butter, Tallow, Copperas, &c. and which was computed near a fifth part of the Duty: Whereas had this Treaty taken Effect, we had in all probability been eased of that extraordinary Burden, which now we must be still subject to.

Before the Treaty of Commerce, there was 50 Sols, or rather 70 Sols, upon the Ton of British Ships, which was a great Discouragement to our Navigation, and a great Advantage to the Dutch, who by the Treaty of

Ryfwick obtained an Exemption from that heavy Duty, by which their Ships and Seamen were employed (being in a Condition to serve upon cheaper Freights) while our Ships were laid up, and our Seamen left to starve at home, or seek Employment abroad, which must still be the Case, now that Article in the Treaty of Commerce, which exempted us from that heavy Duty of Tonnage, by our not being able to send out any Goods, in effect is set aside. And it is observable, that tho' Scotland was of old free both from the Tonnage in France, and of the Droit Aubain, by which the King of France succeeds to the Estates and Effects of Strangers dying in France, (which severe Law the Dutch, by the Treaty of Ryfwick, were exempted from) yet since the Year 1688, the Duty of Tonnage has been exacted from the Scots: and no doubt the Droit Aubain will likewise be executed so soon as there is an Opportunity; for in the Year 1701, a Scots Factor having left Paris, and gone to Italy upon the breaking out of the War, upon a Report of his being dead, his Effects were seized, which obliged him to return to France to recover his Effects, by proving he was alive.

The Advantages Scotland would have had by the Accession of the Plantation-Trade, and the Exporting of Tobacco, Sugar, Cotton, Dying Woods, &c. into France upon reasonable Duties, had the Treaty taken effect, are likewise very considerable.

The Encouragement we perceive by the Votes was intended for our Linnen Manufacture, by taking off the Duties upon Flax and Linseed Imported, and upon British Linnen Exported, would have been very beneficial to our Country; which, with the many Advantages above-mentioned, we have forfeited by flinging out this Bill.

To conclude: As all, who pretend to know any thing of the Trade of this Country, are much concern'd at the Throwing-out of a Bill so beneficial to Scotland; so they can't but admire the Conduct of some, who appear'd so warmly against our Interest. Those, who did it ignorantly, ought to be forgiven; but if any, upon the account of Party, or personal Disappointment, have thus sacrific'd their Nations Interest, they cannot fail of suitable Thanks from their Country.

By this Paper, as by a Table, not the Scots only, but all Britain, may have a clear View of the State of their Trade to France, both as it would have been, had the Treaty taken place, and as it now is, the Articles having not been made effectual: And as it is a great Satisfaction to all those, who wish well to the Common Good of Britain, to find, that the Knowledge and Sense of these Things begin to take place in the Minds of the People; so there can be no doubt, but as the present Amusements wear off, Reason, and the Interest of Trade, will prevail farther. People, when they see more clearly into Things, will be of another Opinion, and the Trade to France will not appear in such a Dress, as it is now maliciously represented.

If any other Country, or Town of Great-Britain, will represent the State of their Trade, it shall be inserted, if agreeable with Truth.

LONDON: Printed for BENJ. TOOKE, at the Temple-Gate; and JOHN BARBER, on Lambeth-Hill. (Price 3 Half-pence.)

